4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
787 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation
182 is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that, having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage [865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set [564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.)

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them.

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog.

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there.

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani

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865 told me that she had had no experience with girls as she had only had boys, but that friends of hers who had had them, said that they are quieter and easier to manage.

864 Boys were much worse when it came to early masturbation. This began at the age of two with them, and they seemed to delight in playing with themselves when sitting in the sand or dust. Nani told her [595] own children that they must not do this, because it would make them sick, and it was always her and not Panju or Narayana who dealt with this matter. She noticed too, that her little boys, when suckling, would sometimes get an erection, whereupon she would beat their fingers away from themselves with a small twig. She had threatened them with castration, too, but she complained that this did not seem to have the slightest effect on them.

155 595 I enquired if Nani had noticed any preference in her boys for herself and any marked animosity and fear for their fathers or one of the fathers, at an early age. I asked her too, if, in other families where there were girls, these did not show a partiality towards their male parents. She replied that it was quite apparent that girls as well as boys preferred the mother to the fathers. As far as she was concerned, she thought that both boys and girls were more drawn to the mother than to the fathers because it was the mother who looked after them from an early age. It was, of course, impossible for me to look more deeply than this into the question of Oedipean inclinations as I had neither the time nor the opportunity to make a proper research into the matter.

864 [595] I was interested to learn that it was Nani who threatened her boys with castration when they masturbated, and neither Panju nor Narayana. What happened in the case of girls in other families, then? Nani said that they were told that they would have their genital organs pinched, and this was sometimes actually done, hard, so as to hurt. Here, I insidiously asked whether the little girls ever felt that they were castrated by comparison to the little boys, but the only effect of my question was to make them all laugh heartily – Panju and Narayana, who were eavesdropping just beyond us in the courtyard, as well.

Upon another day, while persevering in my attempts to find out about the early development of Thandan children living in polyandry, I asked if Nani had noticed a period of calm in which the children ceased masturbating and seemed no longer to take any interest in sexual matters. She took this seriously and replied yes, that she had noticed such a lull. Between the ages of four and thirteen, they were very quiet, with only brief, temporary interruptions. At the end of this time, boys and girls